

COMMUNICATION FROM THE
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROSS) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 21, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 21, 2008, at 1:08 p.m.:

That the Senate agreed to the conference report accompanying the bill: H.R. 2082.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK WEEK

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 978) expressing support for the designation of the week of March 3-7, 2008, as "School Social Work Week" to promote awareness of the vital role of school social workers in schools, and in the community as a whole, in helping students prepare for their future as productive citizens.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 978

Whereas the School Social Work Association of America declared the week of March 3-7, 2008, "School Social Work Week";

Whereas the House of Representatives recognized the importance of school social work through the inclusion of school social work programs in the current authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

Whereas school social workers serve as vital members of a school's educational team, playing a central role in creating partnerships between the home, school, and community, to ensure student academic success;

Whereas school social workers are especially skilled in providing services to students who face serious challenges to school success, including poverty, disability, discrimination, abuse, addiction, bullying, divorce of parents, loss of a loved one, and other barriers to learning;

Whereas there is a growing need for school districts to offer the mental health services that school social workers provide when

working with families, teachers, principals, community agencies, and other entities to address the emotional, physical, and environmental needs so that students may achieve behavioral and academic success;

Whereas to achieve the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 of help for all children in reaching their optimal potential and achievement, including those with serious emotional disturbances, schools must work to remove the emotional, behavioral, and academic barriers that interfere with student success in school;

Whereas fewer than 1 in 5 of the 17,500,000 children in need of mental health services actually receive these services, and the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health indicates that school mental health programs improve educational outcomes by decreasing absences, decreasing discipline referrals, and improving academic achievement;

Whereas school mental health programs are critical to early identification of mental health problems and in the provision of appropriate services when needed;

Whereas the national average ratio of students to school social workers recommended by the School Social Work Association of America is 400 to 1; and

Whereas the celebration of "School Social Work Week" highlights the awareness of the vital role school social workers play in the lives of students in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors and recognizes the contributions of school social workers to the success of students in schools across the Nation; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe "School Social Work Week" with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the vital role of school social workers in schools, and the community as a whole, in helping students prepare for their future as productive citizens.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H. Res. 978 into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. COURTNEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 978, a resolution to recognize the week of March 3-7 as National School Social Worker Week.

School social workers have long played a critical role in schools in the community as a whole. They are professionals with training in social mental health intervention who work with youth to address their emotional, social, and developmental needs. For example, students in elementary school are just beginning to develop their aca-

demic self-concept and their feelings of competence. School social workers help students build their confidence as learners.

In middle school, many new challenges arise. During this passage from childhood to adolescence, middle school students are characterized by a need to explore a variety of interests connecting their learning into the classroom to its practical application in life. For these students, school social workers provide proactive leadership that engage all stakeholders in the delivery of programs and services to help students navigate the challenges and achieve success.

And in high school, students begin separating from parents and exploring and defining their independence. They face increased pressure regarding risk behaviors involving sex, alcohol, and drugs, while exploring the boundaries of the more acceptable behavior and mature, meaningful relationships. School social workers help make them concrete and compounded decisions.

On top of this, school social workers must be responsive to the range of challenges that young people face every day such as poverty, disability, discrimination, abuse, addiction, bullying, divorce of parents, loss of a loved one, and other barriers to learning.

School social workers are also on the front lines when disaster strikes, such as the Southern California wildfires or Hurricane Katrina, as well as other traumatic incidents such as the atrocities on 9/11. There is a documentation of the growing need for school districts to expand mental and student support services in schools. The numbers indicate that only 1 in 5 of the 17,500,000 children in need of mental health actually received those services.

Many students go underserved primarily because the national average ratio of student-to-school social workers is far beneath the 400-1 ratio recommended by the School Social Work Association of America.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution serves to recognize the treasure that is the school social worker and acknowledge the priceless role that they play in guiding our students' success in the ever-changing world of the 21st century.

I urge my colleagues to resoundingly pass this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to support H. Res. 978, which expresses the support for the designation of the week of March 3-7 of this year as the School Social Work Week. And it will promote the awareness of the vital role of school social workers in schools, and in the community as the whole, where they help students to prepare for their future as productive citizens.

From time to time, students face certain challenges to achieving academic

success. The emotional, social, and behavioral problems can be serious impediments to learning and can have a deleterious effect not just on the individual student, but on others in the school setting. Schools, families, communities must work collaboratively to assist students to achieve the positive academic and behavioral outcomes.

School social work service provides a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of students through early identification, prevention, intervention, counseling, as well as support. And school social workers are trained, qualified professionals who meet the State requirements to practice social work specifically in a school setting. They provide direct services to students who experience academic and social difficulties. They develop relationships that bolster self-esteem, reward positive behavior. School social workers support teachers by offering options for addressing student needs and by participating in the student support team. School social workers work with families and communities, coordinate services to the students as well as to the family.

According to the National Mental Health Association, there are between 17 and 18 million children who are in need of mental health services, and those are just the ones I taught in my classes. These workers address those particular needs. School social workers help students who otherwise might not receive services due to inaccessibility or lack of availability of services.

So I commend these dedicated professionals for the service they provide, and I ask my colleagues also to support this resolution which would identify School Social Work Week this coming March.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COURTNEY. I would just say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would join the gentleman from Utah in support of this resolution which recognizes an important group in our country and salutes the work that they perform. And I would urge all Members to support this resolution.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 978, supporting "School Social Work Week."

I introduced this resolution in order to recognize and support the critical, unsung work performed by social workers in schools across our country.

Each day across the country, school social workers can be found assisting educators to understand family, cultural, and community factors affecting students and meet the demands of providing quality educations for students of diverse backgrounds.

Each day they can be found working with administrators to design and implement effective prevention programs and policies that address school attendance, teen pregnancy, school violence and school safety, child abuse and neglect, special education, and more.

Each day school social workers can be found working with parents so that they may effectively participate in their child's education,

improve their parenting skills, understand special education services, and access school and community services related to their child's needs.

Services provided by school social workers strengthen the ability of children to learn and to improve their futures.

It is a shame that fewer than 1 in 5 of the 17 million children in need of mental health services actually receive them. Improved and expanded school mental health programs would help to provide these services. The kinds of services that so many students desperately need are precisely the type of services that school social workers can provide.

That is why I am proud to be the sponsor of this resolution. I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member of the House Education and Labor Committee for allowing this resolution to come to the floor, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support of House Resolution 978, designating March 3–7, 2008, as "School Social Work Week" introduced by my distinguished colleague from Rhode Island, Representative PATRICK KENNEDY. This important legislation recognizes and celebrates the many contributions of school social workers in our schools, communities, and government agencies.

Social work is a relatively young profession with roots in the social reform movements, self-help societies, and social service organizations which formed in the latter half of the 19th century to provide assistance to the needy and oppressed. Today, social workers are committed to serving culturally diverse populations and the oppressed, promoting social justice, providing leadership in social policy formulation and implementation, and advancing the knowledge base of the profession. School social work is a specialized area of practice within the broad field of the social work profession that works directly with children, families, schools, and the community at large.

School social workers bring unique knowledge and skills to the school system and the student services team. School social workers enhance the school district's ability to meet its academic mission, especially where home, school and community collaboration is the key to achieving that mission.

The position of school social workers in local school systems has grown rapidly in the last few years. As schools look at preparing students both academically and socially, the role of the professionals working with students has expanded. Effective school social work services contribute not only to a healthy school environment, but benefit society as a whole. They provide crisis intervention, counseling services, and support; they link students and families with school and community resources; and they work with all school personnel to help students succeed.

Working one-on-one with a student or designing group activities that reinforce successful learning skills, school social workers create a team environment where everyone works for the betterment of their students. Student success is heightened when families, teachers, and school social workers work collaboratively to provide positive school-home communication. Earlier this month, Texas held its Seventeenth Annual School of Social Work Conference.

The Texas School Social Worker of the Year Award went to James Montoya of Nacogdoches Independent School District. Mr. Montoya has been a social worker for over 30 years, with the last 8 as a school social worker. For the past 5 years, he has produced and hosted a local television show, "La Conexión Hispana." This production highlights resources in the community, features school personnel and Hispanic leaders who model and encourage students to stay in school, and provides Mr. Montoya with an opportunity to reach out and "touch" many families throughout the region. He is the first social worker to serve in this capacity and this is the first Spanish program of its kind to be offered in the region. In August 2005, following Hurricane Katrina, Mr. Montoya was instrumental in registering over 800 displaced students into the school district. His efforts included working in the shelters and providing translation services to those in need. I would like to congratulate him and the many school social workers like him, for all the work they have done and continue to do for our children, our communities, and our country.

As a member of the Children's Caucus, I am proud to support House Resolution 978 and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important piece of legislation.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 978.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1615

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 930) supporting the goals and ideals of "Career and Technical Education Month," as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 930

Whereas there are over 15,000,000 secondary and postsecondary career and technical education students in the United States;

Whereas nationwide, there are over 10,000 secondary high schools and career tech centers and over 9,000 postsecondary institutions offering career and technical education programs;

Whereas a competitive global economy requires workers trained in skilled professions; Whereas career and technical education plays a crucial role in preparing a well-educated and skilled workforce in America;